

Berlin, Germany: 2006 Crime and Safety Report

CRIME AND SAFETY

Europe - Germany

6 Jan 2006

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

The Department of State assesses all German cities with U.S. Diplomatic presence as low to medium for criminal activity. According to the crime statistics available to the Embassy, American tourists visiting Germany are rarely the victims of criminal activity. If and when criminal activity does occur, the most common incidents include theft of unattended personal property, vehicle break-ins (snatch and grab), pickpockets (often in major train stations), and residential break-ins. Although infrequent, American tourists have encountered purse-snatching and pickpockets in the following areas: train stations, internet cafes, crowded restaurants and outdoor market places. American visitors to Germany should practice the same sound, common sense personal security practices that are an every-day part of life in any major U.S. city.

Recently, crime statistics have indicated that break-ins, both residential and vehicular, are on a steady rise. In the past year, the Embassy and a number of its constituent posts have encountered small thefts of unattended property left unsecured outside residences or inside vehicles. Vandalism of vehicles has also increased in Germany. Rarely are crimes violent, and seldom are weapons used. OSAC members and individuals planning to visit Germany may find extensive information regarding crime statistics and German crime prevention programs in both German and English on the website of the German Federal Criminal Police (Bundeskriminalamt) at <http://www.bka.de>.

Political Violence

The Department of State assesses all German cities with U.S. Diplomatic presence as low to medium for political violence. While ordinarily the German population is supportive of the U.S., there is still a large anti-war movement in Germany. The Embassy and its constituent posts experienced a number of anti-American protests in 2005, though these were fewer and less intense than in previous years. These protests are normally peaceful and the German police are highly trained and prepared for protests.

The German economy continues to struggle; therefore, numerous spontaneous demonstrations concerning education and other economic and social issues have become abundant throughout Germany. Most of the demonstrations take place on major streets in the larger cities of Germany. For example, in Berlin, demonstrations typically take place on Unter Den Linden, a major street in the heart of the city.

While there have been no recent significant terrorist attacks in Germany, the Department of State assesses all German cities with U.S. Diplomatic presence as medium to high for transnational terrorism. Hamburg continues to hold trials for suspected terrorists involved in the September 11 attacks on U.S. soil. German authorities are continuing to investigate extremist groups and banning those individuals considered particularly dangerous. German authorities frequently conduct raids on suspected groups throughout the country.

Post-specific Concerns

Illegal narcotics, particularly cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, and marijuana, are available in

Germany. These types of drugs, and associated drug activity, are often found near major train stations and nightclubs, but are not limited to these areas. Drug use activity does not usually affect tourists or traveling businessmen. However, Germany has the same types of drug-related crimes as those encountered in any major U.S. city, albeit to a lesser extent. Tourists and traveling businessmen should exercise added caution in heavy drug-use areas in order to avoid and deter drug-related crimes, such as theft.

Civil unrest in France during October and November 2005 caused some minor disturbances in Germany as well. A significant number of privately owned vehicles were set on fire in Berlin and other major urban areas throughout the country. German police, however, quickly and effectively contained these incidents. No widespread or systematic destruction of property occurred. German authorities later assessed that these vehicle fires were set by known criminal elements and were not a manifestation of social unrest. No vehicles or property known to belong to U.S. persons were damaged or destroyed during this period.

Police Response

German law enforcement agencies and other emergency services are professional and extremely responsive. The country-wide police emergency telephone number is 110. American tourists visiting Germany are encouraged to contact the local police if an accident or crime has occurred. German authorities contact the Embassy or constituent post when an incident involving American tourists occurs.

Medical Emergencies

Throughout Germany, the Fire Department and ambulance service may be reached at telephone number 112. Germany has a number of major university hospitals. These facilities provide state-of-the-art medical care in most fields of medicine, including the most advanced cardiac surgery and transplants.

Berlin

Klinikum Benjamin Franklin Freie Universitätsklinikum Hindenburgdamm 30, Steglitz - Tel: 8445-0 (two helipads)

Campus Charité Virchow-Klinikum Faculty of Humboldt University Augusteburger Platz 1, Wedding - Tel: 450-50 (two helipads)

Campus Charité Mitte Faculty of Humboldt University Schumann Strauss 20-21, Mitte - Tel: 450-50

Leipzig

Universitätsklinikum Leipzig Liebigstrasse 27, Leipzig - Tel: 0341 97-0

Munich

Klinikum Rechts der Isar Ismaningerstrasse 22, Munich - Tel: 4140-2090

Hamburg

Allgemeines Krankenhaus St. George Chirurgische Notfallaufnahme Lohmühlenstrasse 5, Hamburg - Tel: 040-2890-20 363

For Further Information

THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BERLIN

Neustädtische Kirchstr. 4-5
10117 Berlin
Federal Republic of Germany
Tel: (030) 2385 174
Closed on American and German holidays

Regional Security Office: (030) 8305-0

Consular Section:
Clayallee 170
14195 Berlin
Federal Republic of Germany

Public Transport: from Zoo Station (Bahnhof Zoologischer Garten), take the U9 two stops to Spichernstrasse, then take the U3 to Oskar-Helene-Heim.
Buses from Zoo Station: X10, 110

American Citizen Services
Routine calls: (030) 832-9233, 2:00-4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.
Emergencies only: (030) 8305-0
Fax: (030) 8305-1215
Opening Hours:
8:30 am until 12:00 noon, Monday through Friday.
Closed on American and German holidays

U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Germany Website: <http://www.usembassy.de/>